



## Revolutionary Guards & Hezbollah React to Change at US Funded Voice of America

By Velma Anne Ruth and Cyrus Shares  
November 6, 2010

Since 2006 there have been considerable efforts to address Voice of America's Persian News Service (VOA/PNN), the US government funded media outlet which broadcasts into Iran. The Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) is the federal organization responsible for managing PNN and other newscasts reaching citizens of countries like Cuba, and historically Russia. In response to political unrest inside Iran during the massive election demonstrations in June 2009, Republican members of Congress increased efforts to reach the Administration, and strongly encouraged VOA/PNN to be used in support of the Iranian people (a & b). Between 2006 and current events, changes continue to be made at VOA and BBG, starting within administrative arms and working their way out to the public platform. In the meantime, viewership inside Iran is dropping, and shows have been cut from PNN.

Amir A. Fakhavar is an Iranian opposition leader exiled in the US, survivor of Iran's viscous political prisons, whose efforts in the west date back to 2006 in his first testimony to US Congress (c). Last week the Iranian military posted a statement against Fakhavar's leadership in opposition to the regime and reform of VOA, not once, but three times. At first, Revolutionary Guards made statement to young Basijis (d). Within days the same text was posted by a special forces group of Hezbollah under Ayatollah Khomeini (e), and then an affiliated website based in the US (f). The combination of IRGC, Hezbollah, and the Supreme Leader suggest the Islamic Republic is on guard.

Here is their statement, with revised translation from Farsi to English, where the Guards took heed to Helle Bale's article at Heritage Foundation, which reflects Fakhavar's pursuit of free press and liberty for Iranians through non-violent means (g):

### "The Voice of Sedition," by Young Journalists Club, Revolutionary Guards of Iran

Based on a report from the Heritage Foundation, Amir Fakhavar who is in close relations with George W. Bush, US senators, has met with Vaclav Havel the mastermind behind the colored coups several times; encouraged sanctions, and increase of VOA and BBC's interference and penetration as the best ways to fuel and direct chaos and uprising in Iran.

He believes VOA is the only media outlet that, next to BBC can build a bridge between the trouble-makers (revolutionaries) inside, and the leaders of sedition outside the country.

After VOA's failed attempts to direct leaders of sedition during post-election unrest, now some experts including several US senators have proposed reform of this media outlet, and Fakhavar agrees with them.

It's very interesting that Amir Fakhavar (aka., Siavash) is one of the founders of the independent student movement, whose anti-regime activities peaked during 1994-95, escaped from Iran in 2006 and moved to America. During his stay in America he has repeatedly called for the overthrow of the Islamic Republic.

Hierarchically, Basij forces are an integrated subdivision of, and administratively answer to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corp (IRGC). Hizballah are a wholly-owned subsidiary of the IRGC/Qods Force, while Nasrallah has publicly pledged bayat to Khomeini. They will attack when, where, and how the Supreme Leader orders. What's more, not all Guards are Iranian. Some are Arab who immigrated into Iran to serve the armed forces and as military police. Inside Iran, Basij and Guards butcher and rape citizens on a daily basis, to the level of

an Iranian holocaust, that has been ongoing since the installation of the Islamic Republic in 1979.

Revolutionary Guards have been ordered to shoot Amir Fakhavar on sight, suggesting this online post may be a message to educate forces about a certain target. The article was originally addressed to Basij inside Iran, but who is the intended US audience? By reflecting on Fakhavar's role in the student movement dating back to the late 1990s, any student also in opposition, perhaps including members of Fakhavar's Confederation of Iranian Students (h), could also be under threat. This leading opposition group has chapters inside and outside Iran, including in the United States, Canada, Europe, Malaysia, and Australia (i). Each member of the student body, leaders, and Fakhavar himself is committed to Gandhi-like peace. Not once have they ever made any threat of violence against the Islamic Republic. However, the Guards appear committed to preemptive strikes.

With attentive smite to the above mentioned article under leading conservative Heritage Foundation, Revolutionary Guards directly recognize Fakhavar's historical involvement in the student movement, extensive policy work in the west, and continued influence in the Iranian freedom movement. The pompous tenor of the Guards reflection is as if the Islamic Republic is rhetorically complaining: Why are you doing this to us, Fakhavar?



Consider the spiritual language used by the Guards. The article title is "Voice of Fetneh" (aka., Fitne or Fitnah) which is not Persian but Islamic-Arabic, referring to civil war and divisions within Islam. The Islamic Republic considers clerics who oppose current religious policies as leaders of fitne (aka., Sarane Fetne). If VOA was a pro-western or pro-regime change platform, Revolutionary Guards would have used the phrase "Voice of Great Satan," "Voice of Zionism," "Voice of Imperialism," or another spiritual disregard for ideological enemies.

The term "fitna" addresses opposition from within. VOA is considered the "Voice of Fitna" because it only gives time to fraudulent opposition within Iran and reformists, while rejecting and banning groups seeking secular democracy, liberty and justice. Fakhavar is one of multiple dissidents banned from VOA, following his testimony to US Congress in June 2006.

The Qu'ran says "Fitna is worse than killing" (Q 2:191), that to impede a Muslim community in any way from practicing and spreading Shariah is far worse than taking up arms to fight and kill those responsible for putting such impediments in the way of Muslims. Islam considers all unbelievers as "Nejes," contaminated to the decree that if a Muslim touches them or eats food touched by them, that Muslim becomes spiritually unholy and their prayers will be void. This is an extreme platform of hate and discrimination towards those with differing beliefs, which compares infidels to pigs, dogs, excretion, and is an ultimate insult to humanity.

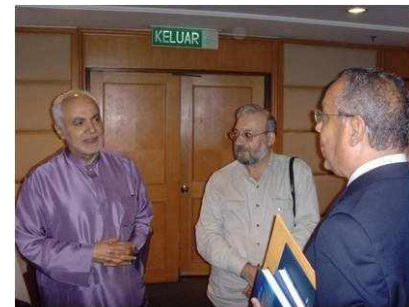
The free world decrees that no one individual deserves to be harmed, no matter race, color, or creed, and war is only for defense. In consideration of those who are Sharia compliant, it is "peace-loving" Muslims who resist violence in all forms, denounce segments of the Qu'ran which purport unjustifiable harm against others, and also denounce terrorism. Unfortunately, the Persian-speaking audience is not likely to find a peace-loving Muslim on VOA's Persian News Network; as to denounce terrorism, is to denounce the very Revolutionary Guards who are speaking out against Fakhavar.

In the spirit of Islamic extremism, the Guards may be claiming that Amir Fakhavar is "sowing mischief in the land" (Q 5:32-33) by successfully addressing VOA/PNN. However, Fakhavar is not doing anything with Iranian media inside the country, and has no bearing on the productions of regime media such as PresTV. Fakhavar resides on US soil, on the other side of the planet, and is speaking with Americans about their media platform which broadcasts in. Therefore, any Islamic extremist concerns about Fitna do not necessarily apply in these modern times, most especially given Amir Abbas Fakhavar is Iranian-American.

Does the Islamic Republic feel they are a stakeholder of this news outlet? If so, US Congress could rightfully and respectably submit that VOA is not owned by the Iranian government, but rather by the American people. The US Secretary of State is on the Board of BBG. By design, news stories are supposed to be governed by Americans. American tax payers sponsor a VOA that is supposed to reflect liberty, and not concede to violence in the face of an oppressed people. What's more, the future of VOA is up to US policy makers, not Iranian officials, who seek truth in news, not "taqiyya."

With all due respect to IRGC, the US separates Church and State, and VOA is run by a government and people which stands for an internationally influential secular constitution. For Iran, it is understandable that they would be concerned for spiritual wrongdoings, because Sharia Law is part of their constitution. However, the United States is not a Muslim country, and Iran is not as Islamic as it seems. America maintains freedom to practice any religion one believes, while reportedly many Iranian citizens are not Muslim, but are Atheist, Agnostic, Bahai, Zoroasterian, Christian, Jewish; though there are both Shia and Sunni Muslims. The Islamic Republic is spiritually diverse, except that Sharia Law allows the Guards to seize any human being, to rape, torture, or murder, in the name of Islamic order and excessive false convictions.

Consider the views of Imam Feisal Rauf, pictured here with the head of human rights in Iran, Mohammad Larijani (image copyright Cordoba Initiative). Imam Rauf is quoted as saying that the US constitution is compliant with Sharia Law. As such, if free press is part of the US constitution, and Fakhraev is merely preserving the American's right to use their media as they see fit, then there is no offense against the Muslim community.



Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf, Dr. Mohammad Javad Larijani and HE Sada Cumber confer at the August, 2008 meeting of the Shariah Index Project in Kuala Lumpur

As stated in Imam Rauf's book (j):

"American Constitution and system of governance uphold the core principles of Islamic law...American political structure is Shariah-compliant..[in the] defined five areas of life [to be protected by Islamic law — life, mind, religion, property, and family]...[Invite] voices of all religions to join the dialogue in shaping the nation's practical life, [and allow] religious communities more leeway to judge among themselves according to their own laws"

Given Imam Rauf's stated positioning, involvement with both the Obama Administration and State Department, and apparent affiliation with the Islamic Republic, it is questionable as to the Cordoba Initiative's stance on Voice of America's coverage of this generation's revolution inside Iran.

Granted, the Obama Administration may be enabling a bias of appeasement in the Persian News Network, but has this internationally renowned Imam confronted the Islamic Republic and its supporters on the massacre of tens, if not hundreds of thousands of Iranian citizens by its own government? Did his State Department funded tour of the Muslim world include address to violence and media propaganda? Would Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf call out for an end to the atrocities by the Islamic Republic, in the name of Khoda, for his Muslim brothers and sisters inside Iran who call out from their rooftops at night, crying - "Allah o Akbar! Allah o Akbar! Allah o Akbar!" pleading, praying for the massacres to stop? Yet the global community fails to hear them, merely because Voice of America will not report, and the Iranian people are broadcasting through YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and blogs, their only sources for free press and public record. And of President Barack Obama, does Imam Feisal Rauf advise him to say Salam Alekum to the Iranian people? No. In a public letter, Imam Rauf advised the Obama administration to stay out of Iranian politics (k). This is why the Iranian people demonstrate in the streets of Tehran saying "Obama ya ba oona ya ba ma" (aka., Obama, are you with them or with us?). The Iranian people are calling for the leader of the Free World to stand for them. They are turning off the television because Voice of America does not speak to them.

Given multiple advances by the Republican side of the House and Senate towards both Bush and Obama administrations about VOA, changes are already apparent at BBG, and individuals are being fired from VOA/PNN for concerning activities. However, the Democrats position on this issue remains unclear. Democrats are by definition concerned with social welfare, yet the Iranian people are oppressed by a communist-style economy of rationing, where the black market is the closest thing to a free market. Democrats by culture are concerned with women's rights, yet Sharia Law inside Iran allows men to rape their wives at will and frequency, while the Islamic Republic advances as a women's rights leader at the United Nations. The liberal platform purports that the Islamic Republic will use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, yet a recently signed deal including Turkey and Brazil for nuclear advancement in the name of medicine could possibly be used to advance bioweapons. At the same time, there is great push to support Palestine, ACLU is defending Hamas, and Brennan stated Islamic extremism does not exist in a White House backed speech at CSIS (1). The Iranian government has made their intentions to destroy Israel perfectly and repeatedly clear. Israel is a great ally to the United States. This is a great turning point in US history when Republicans are the ones who stand for women's rights, oppressed people, are firmly against corruption, and refuse to turn their backs on a life-long ally. How are Democrats being advised in this historical era, where a Gandhi-like people are rising up in a revolution against the most dangerous government in the world? Democrats should be proud of these freedom fighters, who brave the loss of life and limb, having already been slaughtered by the masses. Democrats know better than this.



Ironically, as VOA viewership is dropping inside Iran, Iranians consistently refer to Israeli news as a trusted source. The Iranian people are grateful for Israel's news sources, while Americans are supporting Palestinian Hamas, an Iran sponsored terror group. To Khomeini, Hezbollah, and Revolutionary Guards, it is not in their interests for the Iranian people to be referring to Israeli news. Why then, would the Islamic Republic potentially interfere with Persian News Network, in a manner which pushes viewers away to depend on the Israelis (aka., Zionists)? Khomeini is calling for clerics to prevent the fall of the Islamic Republic. Perhaps there are peace-loving clerics that are silenced and under threat, who could rise to the occasion and keep the Iranian people's eyes on Iran. VOA could be utilized for academic debates on Islam with critics and ex-Muslims in the west, about the growing Atheism and Agnosticism inside Iran, and modern spirituality that lacks religion though embraces inter-faith dialog by definition (i.e., One Love, One God). Given the massacres committed by the Iranian government against its very own citizens, the Iranian people deserve a free press which can liberate their spirit, to at least help them heal from and survive among the ongoing atrocities.

In the midst of Fakhravar's brave efforts in the west, the Islamic Republic is not on their knees. As a direct attack against Amir Abbas, they have effectively held the Fakhravar family hostage inside Iran, seized passports, put certain members on probation, and relentlessly monitor activities. Even Parvaneh Fakhravar, Amir Abbas' innocent mother is called into Revolutionary Court to be harassed with her children and grandchildren on a regular basis. This family has been accused of threats to Iranian security, when they have nothing whatsoever to do with Amir Abbas' efforts in the west. As Revolutionary Court continues to threaten the family with time in Evin Prison, Mrs. Fakhravar recently suffered a heart attack and aneurism after two days of tears.

Given the Guards international message against Fakhravar and change from within BBG, it appears the Iranian government is content with current news being broadcast from VOA, its failures to promote liberty since the election fraud demonstrations, and general disinterest in projections of the free world. By acknowledging Fakhravar as a key leader impacting change, their article's undertone suggests the Islamic Republic actually fears reform of VOA/PNN. However, Voice of America is one of countless media outlets the regime has to work with, and so its reform should be of no concern. Americans retain the right to draw the line and preserve Voice of America as a pillar of free press for the global community, and give Iranians the truth in news they seek.



For continuing updates on reforming VOA's Persian News Service,  
please see VOA/PNN Watchdog, Iranian Freedom Institute: <http://voapnnwatchdog.blogspot.com>

## References

- (a) Republican Congressional Letter to Pres. Barack Obama:  
[http://www.absnetwork.org/media/AA/AH/absnetwork-org/downloads/96541/Congress\\_Writing\\_President\\_Obama.pdf](http://www.absnetwork.org/media/AA/AH/absnetwork-org/downloads/96541/Congress_Writing_President_Obama.pdf)
  - (b) Republican Congressional Letter to Sec. Hillary R. Clinton:  
[http://www.absnetwork.org/media/AA/AH/absnetwork-org/downloads/96551/Congressional\\_Letter\\_to\\_Secretary\\_of\\_State.pdf](http://www.absnetwork.org/media/AA/AH/absnetwork-org/downloads/96551/Congressional_Letter_to_Secretary_of_State.pdf)
  - (c) Iran's Nuclear Impasse, June 20, 2006  
[http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing\\_id=2f6b3ebc-f506-4a8b-b3dd-6f25f8234fcf](http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Hearings.Hearing&Hearing_id=2f6b3ebc-f506-4a8b-b3dd-6f25f8234fcf)
  - (d) Post 1: Revolutionary Guards to Young Basijis (Farsi): <http://world.yjc.ir/NewsDesc.aspx?newsid=373455>
  - (e) Post 2: Special forces division of Hezbollah supporting Ayatollah Khomeini (Farsi): <http://ammariyon.ir/fa/pages/?cid=2404>
  - (f) Post 3: US based website (Farsi): <http://www.sarkhat.com/fa/group/tzdgiea/%EF%BB%BF>
  - (g) Heritage Foundation Citation - Helle Bale (English): <http://blog.heritage.org/?p=45496>
  - (h) Confederation of Iranian Students: [www.cistudents.org](http://www.cistudents.org)
  - (i) Confederation of Iranian Students - Chapters: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=126063460319>
  - (j) Selected Quote from Imam Rauf: [http://www.analyst-network.com/article.php?art\\_id=3453](http://www.analyst-network.com/article.php?art_id=3453)
  - (k) Cordoba Initiative advise to Obama administration to refrain from interfering in Iranian national politics, as a revolution erupted inside Iran: <http://www.cordobainitiative.org/?q=content/what-president-obama-should-say-about-irans-election>
  - (l) Remarks by Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counter-terrorism John Brennan at CSIS  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-assistant-president-homeland-security-and-counterterrorism-john-brennan-csi>
- Definition - "Fitna" (English): [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fitna\\_\(word\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fitna_(word))  
Definition - Taqiyya (English): <http://www.meforum.org/2538/taqiyya-islam-rules-of-war>